

In the Claims:

Cancel claims 1 through 11 and 18.

The claim status is now:

Claims 1 - 11 (Canceled)

12. (Previously Presented) Apparatus (30) for reading a data stream (32) which comprises two reference points, starting from which at least part of a code word is written in a first or second writing direction, the apparatus comprising the following:

a first apparatus (36) for reading, starting from the first reference point, in a first direction of reading which corresponds to the first direction of writing;

and a second device (38) for reading, starting from the second reference point, in a second direction of reading which is opposite to the first direction of reading.

13. (Previously Presented) Apparatus as claimed in claim 12, wherein the data stream comprises a multitude of raster points as reference points, the raster points specifying a raster, two adjacent raster points defining a segment, wherein the data stream comprises a plurality of sets of code words, a first set of code words being written in the first direction and a second set of code words being written in a second direction, the code words of the second set being assigned to segments of the data stream in accordance with a predetermined assignment rule, such that each code word of a set is assigned to a different segment, the apparatus further comprising the following:

a control device (40) for supplying the code words of the first set to the first writing device (36), the code word of the first set starting at a raster point, and for supplying the code words of the second set to the second reading device (38), wherein, in accordance with the predetermined assignment rule, one jumps to corresponding raster points, wherein it is verified, if no code word is found at a reference point, whether code words of the second set are present at corresponding raster points in accordance with the assignment rule and wherein, after all code words of the second set have been read, one jumps to a different raster point in accordance with the predetermined rule, in order to obtain all code words of the second set completely.

14. (Previously Presented) Apparatus as claimed in claim 13, wherein, if only one starting section of a code word is read by a writing device in one segment, this starting section is stored.

15. (Previously Presented) Apparatus as claimed in any of the preceding claims, wherein the code words are Huffman code words.

16. (Previously Presented) Apparatus as claimed in any of the preceding claims, wherein the code words represent information symbols and wherein code words of the first set represent more significant information symbols than code words of the second set or of further sets.

17. (Previously Presented) Apparatus as claimed in claim 16, wherein the information symbols are spectral values of an audio signal, and wherein the code words of the first set are spectral values which are significant from a psycho-acoustic point of view and which are to be protected from error propagation due to a transmission error in the data stream.

18. (Canceled)

19. (Previously Presented) Method (30) for reading a data stream (32) which comprises two reference points, from which at least a part of the code word is written in a first and a second direction of writing, respectively, the method comprising the following steps:

reading, starting from the first reference point, in a first direction of reading which corresponds to the first direction of writing; and

reading, starting from the second reference point, in a second direction of reading which is opposite to the first direction of reading.